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FIFA FEVER KICKS OFF WITH KARINA
metroTALKS

New Cubs on the Block

The Assiniboine Park Zoo released photos Wednesday of two of the zoo's newest babies — a pair of male snow leopard cubs. The cubs are healthy and each weigh about 1.5 kilograms. APC/HANDOUT

Family law gets revamp

LEGISLATION

Changes coming to better protect child rights

Are you a deadbeat parent? Prepare to be persecuted harder.

Attorney General Gord Mackintosh announced Wednesday sweeping changes to family laws in Manitoba, aimed, he said, at making sure the child's best interests always come first:

"The proposed legislation ... would also include strong, new tools to collect child support from parents following separation or divorce."

Some of those tools include posting names of people who fail to pay child support and have outstanding arrest warrants online, allowing children to personally apply for child support, withholding things like the Manitoba enhanced identification card and recreational licences from those who owe child support, and increasing fines for late or missed payment to $5,000 from $500.

The new laws will also strengthen the "express requirement for the child's best interest to be the only consideration when dealing with custody, access or guardianship."

Mackintosh said the laws will also be updated to deal with societal changes around parental rights — and recognize the fact that some children will have more than two legal parents.

"(Provincial law must) recognize the fact that family structures have changed over the years, particularly with advances in reproductive technologies. "These legislative changes would benefit all families including blended families, those with fertility issues and LGBT families." METRO

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metro NEWS

Your essential daily news

U.S. city leaders want sharing economy to grow. **Business**

SAFETY

Thousands gather to break helmet record

They may have broken a record, but they didn't break their heads.

More than 1,300 staff and students from local schools donned bicycle helmets Wednesday morning in an attempt to break the Guinness World Record for the largest gathering of people wearing helmets.

Yes there's a record for that, and apparently it's 1,263.

The event was held by the Manitoba government to celebrate the 10-year anniversary of the province's low-cost bike helmet initiative.

"Cycling is a fun, healthy and environmentally friendly way to get around, whether you're going to work, school, running errands or just out for a ride, but safety is rule number one," said Healthy Living and Seniors Minister Crothers in a release. "I'm proud the province has helped keep Manitoba cyclists safe by providing more than 104,000 low- or no-cost helmets to families across the province since 2005."

A provincial spokesperson told Metro the staff and students unofficially broke the record by roughly 40, and now the results will be reviewed by Guinness World Record officials. METRO

Kids from Darwin School were among more than 1,300 people from local schools who gathered Wednesday in an attempt to break the world helmet-wearing record. SHANE GIBSON/METRO

Teenager charged in high-school murder

CRIME

Lunch-hour stabbing leaves 17-year-old student dead

Shane Gibson
Metro | Winnipeg

A student from Kelvin High School is in police custody in connection with the stabbing death of another teen at the school over the lunch hour Tuesday.

Police confirmed Wednesday that 17-year-old Brett Bourne is the Kelvin student rushed to hospital after a fight at the school turned bloody around 12:30 p.m.

Bourne was pronounced dead in hospital.

A 17-year-old male taken into custody at the scene has been charged with second-degree murder for his alleged involvement.

Winnipeg police spokesman Const. Jason Michalyshen said a "minor altercation" broke out between the victim and another teen, a 16-year-old male Kelvin student, on the grounds of the school but ended soon after it started when the 16-year-old walked away.

That's when police allege the accused jumped in and stabbed Bourne.

Brett Bourne, 17, died after being stabbed outside Kelvin High School on Tuesday, and police have a 17-year-old male student in custody in connection to the killing. FACEBOOK

"The third male was in the area and certainly appears to have been armed," said Michalyshen.

He wouldn't say exactly what the original fight was about, telling media only that the three teens knew each other and had "ongoing relationship issues."

He also wouldn't confirm reports on social media from students the fight was over a girl.

The Winnipeg School Division said counsellors were at the school immediately after the stabbing Tuesday and remained at the school Wednesday to help staff and students.

"We have a good school with great students and a terrific staff and it is devastating to our school community to have such a senseless act take place," said Kelvin's principal Jim Brown in a release. "I'm very thankful to Winnipeg Police Services, the Tactical Support Team and Winnipeg Fire and Paramedic Services for their response and support."

Police continue to investigate and anyone with information who has not yet spoke to police is asked to call 204-986-6508 or Winnipeg CrimeStoppers at 204-786-TIPS.

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RECREATION

Restoration of Sherbrook Pool now underway and on schedule, says city

The city said Wednesday that work to fix up Sherbrook Pool started this week, and although it just started, the city affirms it is so far on schedule.

Last May, the province, the city and the Kinsmen Club of Winnipeg announced a $4-million partnership to "return the Sherbrook Pool to its place as an important health and fitness facility for Winnipeg's core area communities."

The pool closed in 2012 after inspections found structural problems with the building, which is more than 80 years old.

The city said repairs to the building systems and structure are on schedule and are expected to take six to nine months, with a goal of re-opening in early 2016.

The city said the roof is the first thing they will work on as construction gets going.

Funding for the renovation project includes $1 million from the province, more than $421,000 in cost-shared funding between the province and the city, about $1.4 million from the city and $952,000 from the Kinsmen Club.

DAVE BAXTER/METRO

$4 million

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Fans travel for Free-Fa

TRANSIT

No cost to ride trolley during FIFA Women's World Cup

Downtown Winnipeg BIZ and the Winnipeg Trolley Company are teaming up to give soccer fans coming for the FIFA Women's World Cup a unique and free way to see the city's downtown.

Rides on the trolley that roams up and down streets in the downtown throughout the summer will be free for fans of the beautiful game during the tournament.

The initiative is called Free-Fa (get it?).

"The FIFA Women's World Cup is going to be one of the most exciting events in Winnipeg this summer," said Benjamin Gilles of Winnipeg Trolley Company in a release. "We are very proud to be supporting the Free-Fa initiative with our downtown partner, the Downtown Winnipeg BIZ.

"When Winnipeggers want to celebrate, they come downtown, and we believe this free downtown shuttle service will help citizens and visitors experience the best parties in the city during the FIFA tournament in an exciting and safe way."

The trolley will head out to downtown restaurants June 8, 12 and 15 from 9 p.m. to 12 a.m. Matches will also be screened live at Portage Place Shopping Centre from June 6 through July 5. METRO

IN BRIEF

CUPE Local 500 inks deal

City of Winnipeg employees who belong to the largest union in the civic workforce have ratified a new contract.

Members of the Canadian Union of Public Employees, Local 500, have voted 61.6 per cent in favour of a two-year deal that provides a wage increase of four per cent over two years.

The agreement covering nearly 5,000 workers in most city departments also includes improvements to job security and benefits.

The previous contract expired late last December.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

C.R. Avery performs show for the hell of it

BACKSTAGE PASS

Vancouver artist says it's 'like a blast from the past'

Jared Story
Metro | Winnipeg

C.R. Avery's bio reads like that of a renaissance man: "Outlaw hip hop harmonica player, beatbox poet, punk piano player, string quartet raconteur, rock 'n' roll matador and playwright."

Not one to lie on his resumé, the Vancouver artist's new show, Some Birds Walk for the Hell of It: A Razzmatazz Opera of Joy, mixes music, theatre, film, dance, comedy and clown, as well as burlesque performers Melody Mangler and Violet Femme.

Some Birds Walk for the Hell of It opened at Times Change(d) High and Lonesome Club last night and continues until Saturday.

"It's going to be one hell of a wang dang doodle," Avery says.

"It's kind of like a blast from the past but with everything that's good about the future and the present. Jelly Roll Morton, when jazz was still dirty, you had dancers. There was a backdrop. I really miss showbiz like that, when it was a show, with everyone running around backstage changing for Act 2.

"But at the same time, the country and folk music of the '60s changed music lyrically forever. We're not excluding that. Let's do a big show, but let's up the ante on the Broadway musical lyrical content. It's like if Townes Van Zandt wrote a musical."

The show, based on Avery's book of poetry and stories Some Birds Walk for the Hell of It (2014, Anvil Press), concerns gentrification, one of the reasons he's choosing to perform it in smaller, character venues like Times Change(d).

"I did it in Vancouver at the oldest coffee shop called Joe's," Avery says. "Back in the '80s, k.d. lang wrote a song there and it was the hangout, but for the last 20 years it's been doing nothing. I reopened that room and it felt like the scene in The Shining where he goes into the ballroom.

"Plus, there's a Lenny Bruce element. I can do a smaller room for four nights instead of a big room for one night. The audience is in the show. You can really talk to them and it's hip. It's going to be cool to have the big showbiz show in Times. It's going to be packed and have those magic bohemian nights."

> **It's going to be cool to have the big showbiz show ... and have those magic bohemian nights.**
> C.R. Avery

IF YOU GO

C.R. Avery performs Some Birds Walk for the Hell of It at Times Change(d) through Saturday. Tickets are $17 at Winnipeg Folk Festival Music Store and Ticketmaster (plus fees). Showtime is 8 p.m.

C.R. Avery says his shows at Times Change(d) will be "one hell of a wang dang doodle." CONTRIBUTED

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Reconciliation must be priority: Sinclair

ABORIGINAL RIGHTS

Parliament talk focuses on duty to act

Prime Minister Stephen Harper listened in silence Wednesday as the head of an exhaustive study of residential schools and their dark legacy urged all levels of government to make reconciliation and healing a top priority.

The results of that study demand a political response, said Justice Murray Sinclair, the chairman of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission that was established in 2007 to document the tragic history of residential schools in Canada.

Harper and Sinclair were among a large gathering of politicians, commissioners, residential-school survivors and members of the aboriginal community who gathered at Rideau Hall to formally close the commission's work. Neither Harper, Aboriginal Affairs Minister Bernard Valcourt nor Environment Minister Leona Aglukkaq spoke at the event.

"The nearly 7,000 people who shared and recorded their experiences and reflections with us have talked about the connections between their residential-school experiences and many things that remain," Sinclair said.

It's the commission's responsibility to share these stories, he continued.

A summary of the commission's findings, which concluded that Canada's residential-school era constituted "cultural genocide," was released Tuesday. Along with it came 94 extensive recommendations that amounted to a comprehensive overhaul of the Crown's relationship with Aboriginal Peoples.

Since then, the daily question period has been dominated by debate about the extent of the government's duty to act on those recommendations — one of which was to adopt the UN Declaration on Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

And for a second straight day, the government refused to acknowledge the commission's use of the phrase "cultural genocide," despite prodding from the opposition.

New Democrat Leader Tom Mulcair said an NDP government would put a "filter" on its decisions to ensure they respect First Nations treaty rights and obligations and embark on a "vast consultation" on aboriginal education. THE CANADIAN PRESS

INQUIRY

Words of warning from Australia

Australian aboriginal leaders in Alberta this week have a warning for Canadian First Nations celebrating the release of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission report.

Don't get your hopes up, said Adrian Burragubba, leader of the Wagan and Jagalingou Traditional Owners Family Representative Council from the state of Queensland. Australia held its own inquiry in the 1990s into the removal of aboriginal children into state-run schools. Burragubba, who is in Alberta as part of a tour to raise awareness about his people's fight against a giant coal mine on their lands, said Australia's report got headlines for a few days, then faded away. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Prime Minister Stephen Harper hugs Elder Evelyn Commanda-Dewache, a residential-school survivor, during the closing ceremony of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission on Wednesday in Ottawa. SEAN KILPATRICK/THE CANADIAN PRESS

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PARLIAMENT SHOOTING

Canada 'ill-prepared' for terror attacks: OPP report

As Michael Zehaf Bibeau ran toward the Centre Block on Oct. 22, the RCMP had more than one chance to stop him.

An officer in a cruiser could have blocked Zehaf Bibeau's path to the Centre Block but for a woman pushing a stroller who tried to jump into the car for safety.

A radio alert that a gunman was on Parliament Hill was so garbled that no one understood it. And the majority of security forces are stationed inside the Parliament Buildings, not outside. None of the officers stationed on the grounds stopped the gunman before he got through the doors — the result, the RCMP say, of systemic security issues, not human error.

> **There is nobody from our perspective that is to blame for this.**
> Gilles Michaud, RCMP assistant commissioner

"There is nobody from our perspective that is to blame for this," said RCMP assistant commissioner Gilles Michaud. He added no one has been disciplined for their actions on Oct. 22.

Yet the events from last October remain a "grim reminder that Canada is ill-prepared" to stop terrorist attacks, with the RCMP suffering a lack of "planning, training and resources" to protect the Parliament buildings, a long-awaited Ontario Provincial Police report says.

The report says the RCMP's ability to protect Parliament Hill has been stretched by resource issues stemming from budget cuts imposed in 2012 by the Conservative government.

"Fortunately," the report says, "the attacker was unorganized." THE CANADIAN PRESS

CAMPAIGN

Mulcair to promise millions in more funds for Canadian cities

NDP Leader Thomas Mulcair is promising to give Canadian cities dramatically more federal funding to pay for urban infrastructure, a big-ticket pledge that would help fuel Toronto's transit expansion, Torstar News Service has learned.

Mulcair is expected to make the promise Saturday when he speaks to municipal leaders gathered in Edmonton at the annual conference of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities.

The NDP is proposing to start by giving cities an extra cent of the federal gas tax, which would mean an extra $420 million a year.

They are vowing to boost funding by $1.5 billion by the end of their first term, meaning a total of $3.7 billion a year dedicated to "core infrastructure," according to a draft NDP document. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

$10M payment was not a bribe: Sports minister

SOUTH AFRICA

Fikile Mbalula says money was for soccer development

South Africa's sports minister "categorically" denied on Wednesday that the $10 million paid to former FIFA official Jack Warner in 2008 was a bribe for his help in securing the World Cup.

Fikile Mbalula, however, said he couldn't say what Warner did with the money, which South Africa claims was "above board" and meant for soccer development in the Caribbean region.

What happened to the cash is "another story for investigators.... We don't know," Mbalula said. "We can't account for that."

Mbalula repeated the South African government's denials that the country paid bribes to win the right to host the 2010 tournament, as alleged in indictments from the U.S. Department of Justice. South Africa's government — and former president Thabo Mbeki — first denied any wrongdoing in the bid process last week.

The Justice Department believes that $10 million was sent by South Africa, through FIFA, to Warner in three wire transfers in 2008 as payback for him and two other then-FIFA executive committee members for backing South Africa in the 2004 vote. South Africa won the World Cup by four votes over Morocco, making the ballots of Warner and his two "co-conspirators" decisive.

Mbalula characterized the $10 million as an "above board payment" to help the game in the Caribbean.

South Africa's sports minister Fikile Mbalula speaks during a news conference in Johannesburg, South Africa, on Wednesday. Mbalula denied that the $10 million paid to former FIFA official Jack Warner in 2008 was a bribe for his help in securing the World Cup. THEMBA HADEBE/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Mbalula also insisted that the South African government had not contradicted itself after the emergence of a leaked letter from then-South African Football Association president Molefi Oliphant in 2008 asking FIFA secretary general Jerome Valcke to send the $10 million to Warner from South Africa's World Cup funds. Oliphant twice specified in the letter that the implicated Warner be in control of the money.

> **We ... categorically deny that our country and government have bribed anyone to win the rights for the 2010 FIFA World Cup.**
> Fikile Mbalula, South Africa's sports minister

"The letter leaked to the media; we don't know why it was leaked in the first place because that correspondence was above board," Mbalula said, denying it suggested a bribe was paid. "Criminals can explain a bribe very well. I don't know how bribes work."

South African soccer officials, who were meant to attend the briefing, were absent. The South African Football Association had said Tuesday that former World Cup bid and organizing officials would attend but didn't then explain why they didn't.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

MORE COVERAGE, SPORTS PAGE 18

BOSTON

Suspect not shot in back: Leaders

A leader of Boston's African-American community said Wednesday that a police video of the fatal shooting of a terror suspect makes clear he "was not shot in the back."

Darnell Williams, head of the Urban League of Eastern Massachusetts, said after viewing the video that he could "150 per cent corroborate" the police account of how the officers engaged with Usaama Rahim.

Boston Police Commissioner William Evans said officers confronted him because "military and law-enforcement lives were at threat."

Rahim had talked with another suspect about "committing beheadings" and "harming police officers," a law-enforcement official familiar with the investigation said.

The official was not authorized to release details and spoke on condition of anonymity.

Rahim was shot because he was menacing the officers with a large military-style knife that he refused to drop, Evans said.

Williams said the images make clear that Rahim "was not on a cellphone and was not shot in the back," two "inaccurate" allegations made by the dead man's brother, Ibrahim Rahim, who is a prominent Muslim scholar.

Williams said he's not ready to say the shooting was justifiable, and a Boston Muslim leader, Imam Abdullah Faaruuq, called the video "inconclusive." He agreed that Rahim wasn't shot in the back but said the images are of poor quality and it wasn't clear whether police had to use deadly force.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Voters defy predictions

POLLING

Forecasters failed to gauge Israel, Poland, U.K. elections

These are tough times for political pollsters.

In recent elections in Israel, Britain and Poland, pre-election polls failed spectacularly to predict actual results, sending shock waves through entire nations on election night. Now many research pollsters are analyzing these fiascos in search of ways to do better.

In Britain, Prime Minister David Cameron's Conservatives won a clear victory on May 7 after polls had predicted a near-tie with Labour, generating expectations of a hung parliament. A day after the election, the British Polling Council launched an inquiry into the polls' inaccuracies.

In Poland, the Association of Market and Opinion Research Organizations, said that it plans to carry out a similar evaluation after a presidential election in which the incumbent, Bronislaw Komorowski, lost to a little-known challenger, following surveys that for months suggested an easy re-election.

Polish President-elect Andrzej Duda celebrates his surprise win on May 24. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

In Israel, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's Likud party won after polls showed the opposition Zionist Union ahead.

> **They weren't lying to the pollsters ... but to themselves.**
> Leighton Vaughan Williams

Leading pollsters in Israel said the discrepancy had more to do with last-minute voter shifts than with any flaws in the polls.

Experts point to several factors — a key one being political correctness. In short, people lie to pollsters because they are ashamed to admit their true intentions.

In Poland, people may have been embarrassed to admit they were voting for the right-wing presidential challenger, saying instead they supported the more moderate incumbent.

In Britain, there appears to be the phenomenon of "shy Tories" — people who secretly intended to vote Conservative, a party still stigmatized as "mean," telling pollsters they'll vote for the more socially progressive Labour.

Professor Leighton Vaughan Williams, director of the Betting Research Unit and the Political Forecasting Unit at Nottingham Business School, also points to how lack of enthusiasm in one camp can distort polling data. He spoke of a "lethargic Labour" effect in Britain, with Labour Party voters not turning out in the expected numbers.

"They stayed home. They weren't lying to the pollsters but, in a sense, they were lying to themselves," he said.

In Britain's election, the bookies proved to be a much more accurate predictor of the election results than the opinion polls. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

THE MONARCHY

Queen's fine, says Palace

Buckingham Palace took the unusual step Wednesday of confirming that the Queen went to a hospital for her annual medical checkup after social media comments touched off speculation on her health.

The rare statement on a private matter for the Queen came after a tweet posted on the account of a BBC journalist said the 89-year-old monarch was being treated in the hospital. The tweet, with a "breaking news" tag, was sent during a BBC rehearsal for the Queen's obituary, suggesting the sender mistook the exercise for the real thing.

"During a technical rehearsal for an obituary, tweets were mistakenly sent from the account of a BBC journalist saying that a member of the royal family had been taken ill," the BBC said. "The tweets were swiftly deleted and we apologize for any offence."

"This was a routine, prescheduled appointment. The Queen has now left hospital," said a palace representative. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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U.S. city leaders keen on sharing economy

PEER-TO-PEER SERVICES

But two-thirds are worried about safety, survey finds

American cities are enticed by the economic growth and services that "sharing economy" companies such as Airbnb, Uber and Lyft can offer, but officials are anxious about safety in a largely unregulated realm, a city advocacy group found in a study released Wednesday.

Nearly three-quarters of city leaders said they want to see the "sharing" sector grow, according to National League of Cities survey responses from 245 leaders of municipalities large and small.

Yet nearly two-thirds said they were concerned about the safety of using apps and websites that let everyday people rent out rooms, arrange car rides and provide other services to strangers. More than half the cities said they imposed no rules on "sharing" players, though their traditional counterparts — like hotels and taxi companies — often are regulated.

While 71 per cent of cities said they supported sharing-economy growth, leaders embrace ride-hailing apps more readily than short-term home rentals, by 66 per cent to 44 per cent. In general, cities see the biggest benefits as improved services (rated No. 1 one by 22 per cent) and economic expansion (20 per cent). Smaller numbers cited entrepreneurship, efficiency, tourism and constituents' enthusiasm.

Sixty-one per cent of cities said safety was their top concern about peer-to-peer services. Just 10 per cent or fewer named any other potential problem.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

While the traditional taxi industry opposes ride-share companies, most of the 245 U.S. city leaders polled said they want to see the "sharing economy" grow. SCOTT OLSON/GETTY IMAGES

MUSIC

Apple set to launch streaming service

Apple is reportedly ready to unveil its new streaming music service next week at the company's annual Worldwide Developer Conference.

Reportedly called Apple Music, the new product is based on Beats Music service which the company acquired in August 2014 for $3 billion US.

While it feels like Apple is arriving late to a market with many streaming services, there is still a large opportunity. Market leader Spotify claims 60 million users worldwide, but only 15 million of those are actually paid subscriptions.

By comparison, there are more than 800 million iTunes accounts, which gives Apple a huge amount of leverage. The company is hoping to convert its customers who download music into music streamers.

But that's a tall order. Apple Music reportedly will cost $10 a month (like Spotify Premium or Deezer Premium), meaning a year of streaming would cost $120. According to the Wall Street Journal, of the 110 million iTunes users in the U.S., most currently spend only about $30 on the service.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

IN BRIEF

Families net worth up 73%
Statistics Canada says the average net worth of Canadian families rose 73 per cent between 1999 and 2012 to an average of $554,100 from $319,800. The top 20 per cent saw their net worth rise 80 per cent, climbing from $721,900 to $1,300,100.
THE CANADIAN PRESS

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GLOBAL CLIMATE CHANGE TALKS

Oil, gas firms demonize coal

Chemistry books say there are three fossil fuels: coal, oil and natural gas. Lately you could get the impression that coal is the only one.

40%
About 40 per cent of global power comes from coal plants.

As a global agreement to rein in climate-warming carbon emissions draws closer, oil and gas companies are increasingly talking about coal as the problem and describing themselves as a crucial part of the solution, together with renewable energy sources like wind and solar power.

"We stand ready to play our part," six major European oil and gas companies including Royal Dutch Shell and BP said in a recent letter to UN climate officials working on a major climate deal set to be adopted in Paris in December.

As they see it, their part includes gobbling up coal's market share in power generation.

The coal industry has resisted counter-strikes against its fellow fossil fuels, opting instead to highlight new technologies that improve the efficiency of coal-fired power plants or capture their CO2 emissions.

The split in the fossil-fuel family represents a shift from the last time the world negotiated a climate agreement: the 1997 Kyoto Protocol. Back then, big oil and coal companies had more of a united front.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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SHOW HOMES

OPEN YEAR ROUND!

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SAGE CREEK

metro VIEWS
Your essential daily news
Thursday, June 4, 2015

CHANTAL HÉBERT: ON TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION

“Did I mention an inspiring ceremony and more than a few solemn commitments followed the (1996) Erasmus-Dussault report? To look at this week’s headlines and the fresh start they allude to is to take a trip back in time.

Underwhelmed by Prime Minister Stephen Harper’s noncommittal response to the remedial prescriptions of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission? Consider this: When Jean Chrétien was handed a similarly devastating royal commission report, it took him a year to respond with a formal apology for the mistreatment of Canada’s aboriginal peoples.

It was another seven years before the ruling Liberals put together a comprehensive action plan.

Set up in the dying days of Brian Mulroney’s tenure, the royal commission headed by George Erasmus and René Dussault spent five years on the report it handed the Chrétien government in 1996.

At 4,000 pages, it set a royal commission record as the most voluminous of its kind.

There were suggestions this week that the Truth and Reconciliation Commission — with 94 recommendations — has taken on more than anyone could chew. But Erasmus and Dussault had 400 recommendations.

As a measure of progress, the lesser number of prescriptions of this week’s commission report is a red herring. The two commissions came at the issue from different angles and there were 20 years between them, but their core findings are depressingly similar.

Did I mention that an inspiring ceremony and more than a few solemn commitments marked the politically well-attended publication of the Erasmus-Dussault report? To look at this week’s headlines and the fresh start they allude to is to take a trip back in time.

The fiscal climate was not auspicious for the 20-year plan the Dussault-Erasmus commission put forward in 1996. The federal budget was still awash in red ink. The report came a year after the Quebec referendum, at a time when the Chrétien government had its hands full with the unity file.

It was almost another decade before the federal government under Paul Martin teamed up with the provinces and the aboriginal leadership to come up with a comprehensive response.

By that time, Canada has raked in budget surpluses for a number of years. Among other things, the ruling Liberals delivered tax cuts for all, a new child benefit for families, a major reinvestment in health care and seed money for a national child-care initiative before they turned their attention to the aboriginal file and the 2005 negotiation of the Kelowna Accord.

At that point, they were on their last legs in power. Martin’s minority government took the Kelowna Accord to its opposition grave a few months later.

All comparisons have limitations, but the repeat false starts on the aboriginal front — which also include at least two failed constitutional attempts — stand in sharp contrast with the energy marshalled on other Canadian game-changing policies.

Take Canada’s transition to linguistic duality.

Alarmed by the rise of Quebec nationalism, Prime Minister Lester B. Pearson set up the royal commission on bilingualism and biculturalism in 1963.

In an interim report published in two years later, it drew a less than flattering portrait of the country’s linguistic landscape and the second-class status of the French language and those who spoke it in Quebec and elsewhere in Canada.

By the time of its official report in 1969, Parliament was already moving forward with the Official Languages Act. Ontario had set out to expand its French-language school system. The first French immersion schools were about to open.

Or take, on another front, the social policy revolution that was the introduction of a national medicare system in the 1960s. It took about a decade for Canada to implement it in every province.

As comprehensive as the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission may be, is anyone really arguing that their implementation would require more heavy lifting than that involved in putting French on a more equal footing with English within Canada’s institutions and education systems?

Their price tag pales in comparison with the start-up cost of a coast-to-coast-to-coast universal health-care system.

This is a federation that has largely managed to talk its way out of serious unity challenges and come up with an intercultural model that, while not perfect, works better than most.

But at the same time, inertia has increasingly become the default response of governments to both emerging and enduring challenges.

And that begs one question: When did Canada lose the political will to change its ways?

Chantal Hébert is a national affairs writer. Her column appears in Metro every Thursday.

THE MICROTREND: Turning off the tap

Californians cut their water use **13.5 per cent** in April compared to the same month in 2013 — impressive, but short of the target of up to **36 per cent** in some communities. By law, businesses, farms and families are all watching their water waste. Mandatory restrictions are in place to help the state get through the worst drought in its history.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

ROSEMARY WESTWOOD

metroview

The Briefcase is a twisted new low for reality television

“What would you do if $101,000 landed on your doorstep?”

That, in a honey-toned voice-over, is the premise of a new reality TV series that makes me want to puke.

The Briefcase exploits families in financial hardship by offering them money, and then forcing them to choose whether to be generous and give the cash to others who are also struggling.

“They’ll learn it’s not the money, but the journey that will teach them what they value most,” the voice-over intones.

What a twisted new low for reality TV.

Disclaimer: I don’t like watching obese British teens hunt in a Borneo jungle (Can Fat Teens Hunt?) or Swedes navigate life without democracy (Dictator).

But I get that many people do. Reality TV shows were three of the top five programs watched in Canada in late May, according to Numeris. That’s despite a ratings dip in the U.S., where slick dramas are pulling in top advertising dollars.

“Reality TV isn’t going anywhere,” Stuart Coxe, a reality TV producer and owner of Antica Productions, told me, “mostly because people watch it.”

That’s true for The Briefcase, which drew 6.87 million viewers to its premiere last week, according to AdWeek.

“Like it or not, there’s some entertainment value,” said AdWeek editor Lisa Granatstein.

I definitely do not like it.

But this isn’t a hate-on for all reality TV. I don’t, as Coxe describes the non-viewers, “assume it’s an incredibly vulgar, demeaning thing that’s corroding our culture.”

“(It) actually deals with a lot more facets of the modern condition more quickly than scripted (TV) can,” he argues.

The most popular shows also “play up the dignity of ordinary people and have more of a redemptive narrative,” he said.

The Briefcase is certainly angling for redemption, mixing sentimental guitar riffs under people crying at the thought of financial stability. But it won’t work.

Reality shows create a moral universe, Coxe noted, and the Briefcase’s universe is way off.

In it, poverty’s ills aren’t alleviated by health care, jobs or housing — but by a generous heart. In it, the only truly good people are the monk-like selfless poor.

That is crazy, especially since CBS, which makes the show, took in $13.81 billion in revenue last year.

For the low price of $101,000 per family, CBS hopes to be even richer.

Don’t help it. Watch MasterChef instead.

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Cameron Crowe apologizes for casting Emma Stone as part-Asian character in Aloha

The casual revolution

It's fashionable to be comfortable ... call it 'comfortcore'

EVA LAM/METRO

Who says you have to suffer for fashion? "Comfort" is the buzzword in style these days — comfortcore, if you will — as more and more women choose to kick up (and off) their heels in oversized knits, drawstring bottoms and the ever-practical sneaker.

"Casual and 'athleisure' have taken on a life of their own," declared the NPD Group in a report showing a one per cent increase in total U.S. apparel, footwear and accessories sales from 2013 to 2014 — an additional $2 billion the market researchers attributed largely to growth in sales of activewear, athletic performance footwear, and bags.

The spillover of the dressed-down look from the gym to the streets reflects a change in the way we look at fitness and health, says Alexandra Grant, fashion and lifestyle blogger at To Vogue or Bust. "Fitness and health have had this almost renaissance in terms of being stylish," she says, and back in vogue is the athletic body type exalted in the '80s and early '90s before the waif fad took hold. "I think as health in general and a healthy body type has had a resurgence, people are also celebrating that sort of casual dress that goes with it."

So how does one do comfortcore? Here's a roundup of essentials:

1 Cargo and go

The military-style jacket offers coverage against the elements and a relaxed feel — but don't go overboard with the rugged theme. As Grant says, "The best way to do (the athleisure trend) is to really not alter the rest of your look at all; just infuse one piece at a time." Matching a boxy jacket with a sleek top and heels will ensure you look ready to hit the boardwalk, not the barracks.

>> Intrepid jacket by Gentle Fawn, $145

2 Room to breathe

The skinny pant may be ubiquitous, but when it comes to comfort, it's hard to beat the drawstring pant — loose-fitting, lightweight and, best of all, adjustable. Go from lounging on the couch to stepping out for brunch in a cinch, pun intended.

>> Mojave pant by Gentle Fawn, $105

3 Summer of the sneaker

It's more fun hitting the hot pavement in a sturdy pair of kicks — and it's an easy look for comfortcore beginners, too. "If you would typically wear ballet slippers with skinny jeans and a leather jacket, you can just swap in your New Balance sneakers," says Grant. Pairing high-tops with a flouncy sundress also offers a contrast that gives the outfit a visual pop.

>> Chuck Taylor All Star '70 by Comme des Garçons Play x Converse, $155 (available in mid-June)

4 That '80s look

Like the jumpsuit and prodigious shoulder pads before it, the slouchy sweater has risen from the neon-coloured ashes of the MTV decade. "I love the look of oversized, sort of '80s-inspired sweaters, just the really classic grey fleece ones," says Grant. She suggests pairing it with leather leggings in the winter, and in the summer, a feminine skirt or shorts — anything with "that kind of delicate touch to it, to give it a nice balance."

>> Aloma crew sweatshirt by Roots, $74

5 They've got you covered

Did someone say granny panties? That's right — the comfortcore movement is underway among undies too, with a burgeoning market for fuller, high-waisted styles.

>> Feminist underwear by Me and You, $25 US

6 Neat little package

Accessories are keeping it casual, too. "Incorporating a backpack into your look is really on-trend right now," says Grant. "It encourages you to move a bit more — get on your bike and look stylish while doing it."

>> City backpack by Herschel Supply, $49.99

ME AND YOU PHOTO: MAYAN TOLEDANO; ALL OTHER PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED

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Fan fic that gives a royal fug

SUMMER READING

Fug Girls take Will and Kate's romance for a novel romp

Henrietta Walmark
Metro | Life

When a little Kate Middleton fan fiction sweeps you off your feet and leaves you curled up on the loveseat binge-reading for the better part of the first gorgeous long weekend of the year, you know you've found the perfect summer read.

That was me on Victoria Day weekend, being royally entertained by The Royal We, a fictionalized recap of a decade-long royal romance, on a holiday honouring a 19th-century royal.

Leave it to Heather Cocks and Jessica Morgan, the "fashion assassins" behind the delightfully snarky celebrity style blog Go Fug Yourself, to take the most talked-about romance of this century and twist it into a page turner of a novel. (Full disclosure: I once tweeted @fuggirls a photo of Kate looking impossibly elegant mid-air while playing field hockey in a tartan McQ by McQueen coatdress.)

Cocks and Morgan's The Royal We (Grand Central Publishing, $29) reimagines Will and Kate's story with American exchange student Rebecca as the commoner who finds herself falling for Prince Nicholas, heir to the British throne, when she spends a year at Oxford.

The idea of turning a fairy tale come true back into fiction arose organically out of a conversation the authors had with their agent, Morgan says, in a phone interview from Los Angeles.

"At the time we were just shooting the breeze talking about Kate Middleton. She makes everything look very easy, but we were saying that the reality can't be easy. It must be very difficult to live in that bright a spotlight," says Morgan.

"We started talking about how surreal it must have been for her to go from being a wealthy person — but a very regular middle-class, civilian girl — to being married to Prince William and what that transition must have been like for her."

Kate and William on their wedding day. GETTY IMAGES

The Royal We is based on Kate and William, she says, "but once we started writing it, Nick and Bex became their own people for us. We used the main signposts of their relationship but, obviously, none of us really know what happens behind closed doors."

"Because so much of the book is about their private life I think we felt very free to just start making stuff up."

"I think if William and Kate were to read the book — which obviously I hope they're reading it right now," Morgan says, laughing, "I think they would like it.

"It's a sympathetic take on what they go through, actually."

The Royal We is the first adult novel for Cocks and Morgan. In addition to creating Go Fug Yourself, the duo have also co-authored two young adult books, Spoiled and Messy.

> **We felt very free to just start making stuff up**
> Co-author Jessica Morgan

The pair met online when they were both writing for Television Without Pity, now defunct, but in the early 2000's the big clearinghouse for recaps on the Internet.

When Heather got a job in Los Angeles, Morgan says, "I was like, I'll take you out for a drink, and I did. The rest is history. We really hit it off. We've been friends ever since."

And co-writers.

"People wonder how we do it," says Morgan. "For us it really doesn't feel that unnatural simply because we've worked together for so long."

"We have the whole book plotted out very, very carefully. And then we trade. I will write until I get sick of writing, working on a couple of chapters," says Morgan. "Then I'll give it to Heather.

"Heather will edit what I wrote, and then she'll write a big old chunk and she'll send it back me, and we'll start the cycle all over again.," she says.

"You don't want to get your writing partner's chunk back and realize she's killed off someone you need for later," Morgan says, laughing.

That attention to detail not only grounds the story but gives The Royal We its zing. Bex and Nick bond over junk treats and Netflix binges of a trash TV show, long before she falls for him. That the course of their love doesn't run smooth is a given. It's the naughty and darker bits that are unexpectedly nice.

The Royal We is a confection of a tale, but a satisfying one, a romantic romp carried by Cocks and Morgan's storytelling.

Morgan says they will write another novel.

"We're still coming out of our fog. We're still living in our fictional land, so we haven't really nailed down what we're going to do next," she says. "Definitely we'll write another book, absolutely, but we don't know what yet."

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Chris Brown is a bad passenger

SMH

Singer berates 'old ass' flight attendant, tries to hotbox plane

IN HOLLYWOOD

Ned Ehrbar

Chris Brown. ALL PHOTOS GETTY/ASSOCIATED PRESS

Chris Brown really needs to work on his people skills.

In the latest round of faux pas by the embattled singer, Brown reportedly made life hell for the crew of a private jet.

The singer apparently was "smoking a ton of pot" despite FAA regulations and requests he stop, according to Us Weekly.

"He blew smoke at a flight attendant and said, 'I paid $60,000 for this jet, so I own it and everyone inside,'" a source says.

He also took aim at another flight attendant: "He told her, 'What is your old ass doing here anyway? I like to have the help be people I'd actually like to f—," the source adds.

Charming, that one.

Also, Chris? Hotboxing a jet and being a jerk to the crew is basically where Justin Bieber was behaviour-wise more than a year ago, so step up your game. And another thing, someone needs to tell him that a private jet — not to mention the people inside — costs much more than 60 grand, so really he was more renting everyone inside of it.

ONCE A CHEATER...

Stripper advises Jennifer Garner to 'run' from Affleck

How do you know your marriage is in trouble? When a stripper purported to be involved in your husband's last big breakup is chiming in — on the record, using her real name — about how you should kick him to the curb.

"I can't say I'm surprised," Tammy Morris tells the National Enquirer when told about rumours that Ben Affleck and Jennifer Garner are headed for a split.

"I believe 'once a cheater always a cheater.' My advice to Jen is: Run!"

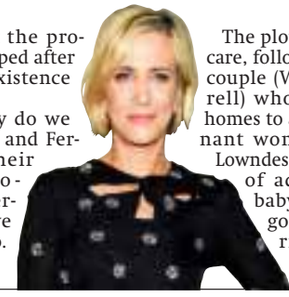
Morris gained some notoriety 12 years ago when she went on the record claiming Affleck had cheated on then-fiancée Jennifer Lopez with her.

For her part, Morris is really just disappointed in Affleck, which is kind of the icing on the cake here.

"I was really hoping Ben had turned his life around," she says. "He married the all-American girl. It's too bad he couldn't make it work." Oof.

A DEADLY ADOPTION

Wiig's Lifetime movie back on



Don't worry, fans of ridiculous camp, that top-secret Lifetime movie starring Will Ferrell and Kristen Wiig that wasn't going to happen is apparently actually going to happen again. And soon.

A billboard for A Deadly Adoption featuring the two stars popped up in L.A. this week with an airdate of June 20, despite claims by Ferrell in April that the project was scrapped after news of its existence leaked.

So not only do we still get Wiig and Ferrell doing their best melodramatic overacting, but we get it soon, too. Score.

The plot, in case you care, follows a married couple (Wiig and Ferrell) who open their homes to a young pregnant woman (Jessica Lowndes) in the hopes of adopting her baby, but things go terribly, terribly wrong, naturally.

I AM CAIT

E! releases promo for Caitlyn Jenner documentary series

Caitlyn Jenner SCREENSHOT

The E! Entertainment network says its documentary series on Caitlyn Jenner premiering next month will be titled I Am Cait, and is showing a promo video for the series depicting her applying makeup.

The Olympic champion is featured in an eight-episode series depicting her transition from a man to a woman that will debut July 26.

E! ramped up promotion Wednesday by releasing a video of Jenner applying lipstick while sitting at a makeup table. She says for the first time a professional had come in and applied makeup for her. "What a difference," she says.

While driving near her California home in the video, Jenner declares: "I'm the new normal."

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metro HOME
Your essential daily news
Replacing locks and door handles is one way to impact the look of a space

5 STYLING HACKS FOR YOUR HOUSEPLANTS

When it comes to decor, plants are all the rage. But you can't buy any old plant, plop it down in its flimsy plastic container and expect it to transform your place. We hit up Brooklyn-based plant designer Lisa Muñoz of LeafandJune.com. The certified horticulturist and self-proclaimed "plant lady" shares some of her best styling tips. TINA CHADHA/METRO IN NEW YORK

1 Flowers not required

Can't find decent flowers? Try philodendron leaves instead. "It's a nice way of adding an accent without having a potted plant or cut flowers that only last a few days," says Muñoz. She says these should last about seven to 10 days.

2 In the corner

"Corners are great for a splash of green." Muñoz recommends creating a grouping and experimenting with various heights of plants and planters. In this group, she used a bird's nest fern ("which unlike a lot of ferns likes bright light") and a fiddle leaf fig. "It's a really nice statement piece," she says. Muñoz also placed a watermelon peperomia on a vintage stool. She loves scouring flea markets for old items to use as stands.

3 Trailing greens

"Trailing plants work really well on a shelf. It creates such a nice waterfall effect and you take advantage of the height of the shelves," says Muñoz. She used a pothos plant in this brownstone bathroom. Another takeaway: Some plants — such as humidity-loving ferns — work especially well in a bathroom.

ERICA GANNETT PHOTOS

4 Creative surface space

Don't let your lack of surface space stop you from peppering your home with houseplants. Muñoz says some plants work well with bright light and heat and can be placed right on top of a radiator. In this room she used an aloe plant, a pencil cactus and a dracaena reflexa. The trick: "Any plant I put on a radiator, I put a little cork plate underneath," she says. "In the winter you just want to check the soil a little more frequently to make sure it's not super dry."

5 Low-light foilage

Don't have a lot of light, but still crave greenery? Muñoz says your best bet is a ZZ (short for Zamioculcas zamiifolia, pictured on the right of the mantel) or snake plant (on the side tables). "Snake plants are super versatile," says the expert. "They're actually all over tropical regions but you can also throw one in a closet and forget about it and it will still be alive months later."

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"This is probably the best I've been" — LeBron James on the eve of the NBA Finals

Thursday, June 4, 2015

Her few words have kick

WOMEN'S WORLD CUP

When Sinclair speaks her teammates pay attention

John Herdman usually doesn't speak to his team in the locker-room after games. The Canadian women's soccer coach prefers to talk later, when heads are cooler.

But in the wake of the crushing 4-3 extra-time loss to the United States in the semifinals at the 2012 Olympics, Herdman knew he had to say something sooner than later. As he walked through the tunnels toward the dressing room at Old Trafford, Herdman told team psychiatrist Ceri Evans his plan.

"He said, 'Look, I think you're right. Let's script some things and make sure we get the message right, because you won't get another chance at this,'" Herdman recalled.

As they approached the dressing room, equipment manager Maeve Glass came out. She was crying.

"She said 'Look, you don't need to go in there, it's done ... Christine (captain Christine Sinclair) just spoke to the team in a way she's never spoke to them before.' And there wasn't a dry eye in the room."

Said goalie Erin McLeod: "I get emotional every time I think about the speech."

The team huddled up. "You could hear a pin drop," said McLeod. And Sinclair, who scored all three Canadian goals that night in a memorable performance, rallied her troops.

Following a heartbreaking loss in the semifinals of the 2012 Olympics, captain Christine Sinclair rallied Canada to a bronze medal. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE FILE

"I just remember sitting in the locker-room at Old Trafford," Sinclair recalled. "Just everyone was heartbroken, rightfully so. Myself included. After a couple of minutes, it sort of hit me that three days from now we're playing for a bronze medal. Just this feeling came over me that I had to say something to this team.

"And I told them I had never been more proud to be their teammate. That the end result didn't happen against the Americans but I've never been more proud to wear that shirt. And that if heading into London, somebody would have said 'You're going to be playing for a bronze medal,' we would have taken it in a heartbeat. And I'm not leaving London without one.

153

Sinclair, who turns 32 on June 12, has 153 goals in 223 appearances.

"I don't know. It just had to be said. Cool if it had an impact on people."

It's typically modest Sinclair, who avoids the spotlight as if it was toxic. She likes to reduce her leadership skills to little more than leading by example. But her post-game address at the Theatre of Dreams sparked the team.

> **"She'll let other people take the lead in general but when something needs to be said, she's the first to say it.**
> Rhian Wilkinson

The Canadian women picked themselves off the floor and went on to defeat France 1-0 for the bronze medal thanks to a Diana Matheson goal in stoppage time.

The medal came 13 months after Canada finished dead last at the 2011 World Cup.

She's no ranter, says Herdman. She leads in a very subtle way.

"And I think often the best leaders, they don't say much but when they speak, people listen. Because they don't say much.

"And Christine works like that. She always says, 'My leadership is in what you see out on the pitch. I lead by example.' But she's more than that. And I think what she's developed in the time I've been there is knowing that her voice has a huge impact on this team and there are moments she has to step up."

Canada, ranked eighth in the world, kicks off the Women's World Cup against No. 16 China on Saturday in Edmonton.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Alex Morgan has scored 51 goals in 84 international appearances for the United States. GETTY IMAGES FILE

Morgan returns to the pitch

Alex Morgan was back for the U.S. national team's first practice in Canada in preparation for the Women's World Cup.

Morgan had been limited in practice and held out of the team's last three matches as a precaution because of a bone bruise in her left knee. Morgan appeared agile Wednesday afternoon in Winnipeg during the brief part of training open to the media.

The United States will need her proven scoring ability as the team tries to win its third World Cup title, and first since 1999. The tournament opens on Saturday with host Canada's group stage match against China. The United States opens play on Monday against Australia.

TROPHY CASE

The United States won World Cups in 1991 and 1999, as well as three straight Olympic gold medals.

To date, Morgan has 51 goals and 32 assists in 84 international appearances. Earlier this year in a 1-0 victory over England, she scored in her 79th international match to become the third-fastest American woman to reach the 50-goal mark behind Michelle Akers (49 games) and Abby Wambach (64).

Coach Jill Ellis said she was "very pleased with the progress" that Morgan has made.

Also returning was midfielder Megan Rapinoe, who had a sore quadriceps and missed the U.S. team's 0-0 draw against South Korea last Saturday in New Jersey. It was the first time the Americans were shut out at home since 2008, also by South Korea. But the U.S. extended its home unbeaten streak to 96 since November 2004 (84-0-12).

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

STANLEY CUP

Blackhawks take Game 1 with comeback victory

Antoine Vermette scored the winner 15:26 into the third period as the Chicago Blackhawks edged the Tampa Bay Lightning 2-1 in Game 1 of the Stanley Cup final on Wednesday.

The Blackhawks, who trailed 1-0 until late in the third, scored two goals in less than two minutes. Teuvo Teravainen tied the game 13:28 into the third.

Alex Killorn opened the scoring for Tampa Bay in the first period.

Corey Crawford made 22 saves for Chicago.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

GOLDEYES

Canaries beat Fish with 5-run fourth

Often one inning is all it takes to get the job done in the American Association, and the Winnipeg Goldeyes witnessed it first hand Wednesday night as the Sioux Falls Canaries came away with the 8-3 decision.

Trailing the Fish 3-1 entering the fourth, the Canaries (6-7) exploded for five two-out runs to take a three-run lead that would not be breached.

Before going five innings without recording a single hit on Sioux Falls starter Miguel Pena, Winnipeg (5-7) struck early with three runs in their first turn at the dish. Returning slugger Casey Haerther drove in his team-leading ninth RBI of the season before he and Josh Mazzola crossed home on a Pena error that began with a fielder's choice.

Pena then rolled, tossing seven more scoreless innings, finishing with one strikeout, a pair of walks and just a single earned run against in his eight total innings of work.

The Fish sent Jonathan Cornelius to the bump for his second start of the season. The first-year Goldeye allowed four runs on seven hits with three strikeouts in just 3-2/3 innings.

Winnipeg and Sioux Falls wrap their three game set with an 11 a.m. Thursday start.

DARRIN BAUMING/FOR METRO

MetroTalks Karina LeBlanc

KEVIN TUONG/FOR METRO

Canada 'keeper sits down to talk Women's World Cup

Leah Holoiday
Metro | Edmonton

In one month, Karina LeBlanc will hang up her cleats and retire from a 17-year career with the Canadian women's national team.

While the countdown to the close of her career is on — a career that includes an Olympic bronze medal, three Pan American Games and four FIFA Women's World Cup appearances — the Maple Ridge, B.C., product said she has one thing on her mind.

That's Saturday.

The 35-year-old goalkeeper and her teammates begin their 2015 FIFA Women's World Cup campaign on Saturday against China at Commonwealth Stadium in Edmonton.

After nearly two decades playing the sport, LeBlanc says not much can phase her. However, preparing for a World Cup on home turf can bring back rookie butterflies.

"I don't think anything ever prepares you for that," LeBlanc said at the Metro Edmonton office on Wednesday. "It's not only the pride and proudness of playing in front of your friends, family and countrymen, but it's the emotions that come with that."

LeBlanc is one of 23 players playing for Canada, ranging in age from 17-year-old newcomer Jessie Fleming, to veterans Rhian Wilkinson, 33 and Melissa Trancredi, 33.

> **It is imperative that people don't show up quiet. They show up loud. They show up in red.**
> Karina LeBlanc

Despite the age gaps, LeBlanc says the team has fully jelled and ready to compete.

"It doesn't matter your age, it doesn't matter your experience, it's the fact that we have this tight family and this family is going to connect in front of the bigger family, which is the country."

The Canadian women's team has come a long way since its struggles at the 2011 World Cup LeBlanc said.

"We gave what we thought was our best and we came dead last," LeBlanc said.

Despite that disappointment, the team was able to regroup and pull together to secure the bronze medal at the 2012 London Olympics.

"It's incredible all of the different emotions (you experience) in a short time, but I think one of the great lessons is that anything is possible if you believe in it," she said.

With nothing on her mind right now except the World Cup (nope, there's no plan for after retirement quite yet), LeBlanc said she'll be looking to the Canadian crowd to push the team into its highest gear.

"It is imperative that people don't show up quiet. They show up loud," LeBlanc said.

"They show up in red.

"There will be moments in this World Cup, where Canadians help us win."

KARINA'S PICKS

Peanut butter or Nutella? Peanut butter

Favourite food? Mango

Favourite drink? Coconut water

Second favourite sport? Basketball

Person you most admire? My parents

Athlete you most admire? Michael Jordan

Favourite match ever? The final of the 2015 Women's World Cup

Favourite hair colour? Red

Hair spray, mousse or cream? Hair spray

Messi or Ronaldo? (Manuel) Neuer, the goalkeeper from Germany

Breakout star of the World Cup? The Canadian women's national team

City you're most excited to play in? Vancouver

World Cup final matchup? Canada versus the next best team

+ CONTROVERSY

From concerns over artificial turf to FIFA's bribery scandal, controversy has not been in short supply ahead of the Women's World Cup.

But Karina LeBlanc says her mind is only on the field of play.

"We've worked since the last World Cup every single day for this one and I don't think anything is going to take away from that for us," she said.

Much has been made of the artificial turf being used instead of regular grass.

LeBlanc said the team was always prepared.

"I can't speak for other countries," she said. "Every team is going to bring their best and I think every team has dealt with the issues of turf or grass. I know for us, our focus has been on the World Cup."

LeBlanc says she hasn't paid much attention to the high-level bribery scandal amongst FIFA executives.

"I'm not even focused on that, to be honest. I don't think any of the athletes playing in this tournament are focused on that."

RECIPE Shrimp and Macaroni Salad

EAT LIGHT AT HOME

Rose Reisman
rosereisman.com
@rosereisman

Ready in
Prep time: 15 minutes
Cook time: 8 minutes

Ingredients
- 8 oz macaroni or small shell pasta
- 12 oz peeled and deveined raw shrimp
- ⅓ cup light mayonnaise
- ⅓ cup low-fat sour cream
- ¼ cup sweet tomato chili sauce or ketchup
- ½ cup minced green bell pepper
- ½ cup minced red bell pepper
- ½ cup minced red onion
- ½ cup chopped fresh dill or parsley
- pinch freshly ground black pepper

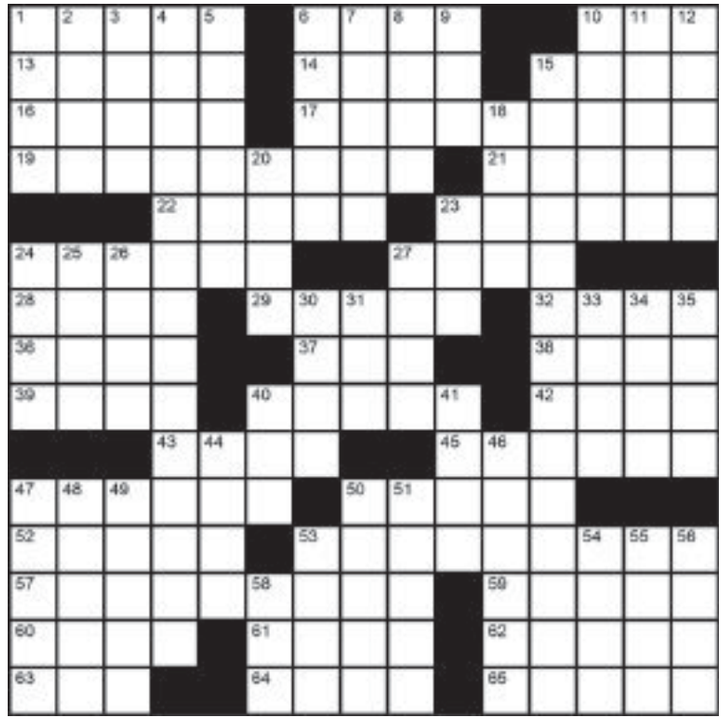
Directions
1. Cook the macaroni in a pot of boiling water for eight to 10 minutes, or until tender but firm.
2. Drain, rinse under cold running water and drain thoroughly.
3. If using large or jumbo shrimp, cut into halves. Spray a non-stick skillet with cooking oil and place over medium-high heat. Cook until pink, about two minutes.
4. Combine the mayonnaise, sour cream and chili sauce in a small bowl and mix well.
5. Combine the green and red pepper, onion, dill, pepper, pasta, shrimp and dressing in a serving bowl. Toss to coat well. Chill before serving.

Nutrition per serving
- Calories 394
- Protein 22 g
- Fat 9 g
- Cholesterol 99 mg
- Sodium 283 mg

PHOTO: ROSE REISMAN

CROSSWORD Canada Across and Down

BY KELLY ANN BUCHANAN



ACROSS
1. Big divide
6. Web address starter
10. 'S' in SPCA [abbr.]
13. Espresso style
14. Cincinnati's home
15. Early helicopter
16. Molecular bits
17. Chapped skin product: 2 wds.
19. Great Big Sea song about a real life Beothuk woman of Newfoundland: "__ Dream"
21. __ & Hawk (Juno-winning band from Winnipeg)
22. Office amounts
23. Ultimate
24. Surrounded by, to The Bard
27. Denpasar is its capital
28. Thought
29. Isolated
32. Voluminous book
36. Fibber
37. __ _ break (Away from one's desk)
38. Majestic
39. Gambler's input
40. Peggys __ Lighthouse (Iconic red-and-white attraction at Peggys Cove)
42. Shindig
43. "__ she blows!"
45. South American wild cat
47. Vintage girdle
50. Pasture place
52. .pdf files program, __ Acrobat
53. Cadbury treat a Viking would love
57. __ __ of Canada = RBC
59. Celine Dion's asset
60. Peanuts character
61. Ballet movement
62. Plaudit
63. Iron's partner
64. Post
65. Slangly-spelled agendas

DOWN
1. Clothed
2. Really don't like
3. Mr. Egoyan
4. Body of water where Peggys Cove is situated: 3 wds.
5. Muddles
6. Boring
7. 1894 Jules Massenet opera
8. Dye
9. Pea's packaging
10. Warfare attack
11. Verbal tests
12. Space object
15. Nova Scotia: Some of the Eastern Shore is composed of this rugged stuff: 2 wds.
18. 'Roof' a room
20. Info
23. Business excess
24. Ms. Kunis
25. Norse deity
26. Orderly
27. __ muffins
30. Broke
31. Singer Ms. DiFranco
33. Iridescent gem
34. Fermented soybean paste
35. Genuine
40. Ms. Benatar
41. Three-__ sloth
44. Scoundrel
46. Fourth wife of Henry VIII, Anne of __ (b.1515 - d.1557)
47. Movie producer Mr. Ponti
48. Stench
49. Rolls-__ (Posh car)
50. "__ __ Acapulco" (1963) starring Elvis Presley
51. Tattooed
53. Corduroy line
54. Nastiness
55. Mil. school
56. Soaks flax
58. Country singer married to actress Kimberly Williams ...his initials-sharers

IT'S ALL IN THE STARS by Sally Brompton

Aries March 21 - April 20
With Mars, your ruler, on such excellent form how can you possibly fail? This is one of those occasions when you must take risks, when you must push the limits. For you there are no limits, so light up the sky.

Taurus April 21 - May 21
You will surprise a few people with your tough guy act today. Usually you are placid in the extreme and rarely raise your voice but over the next 24 hours you will go right the other way. Scream and shout!

Gemini May 22 - June 21
If you push yourself hard now you will accomplish more in the next 24 hours than most people manage in 24 days. You won't lack for energy or passion — and if you use your brains you won't lack for anything.

Cancer June 22 - July 23
If you don't get what you want one way, you will get it another — you are in one of your imperious moods, the kind where you can easily intimidate people. No one says "no" to a Cancer — at least not today.

Leo July 24 - Aug. 23
Don't worry about making mistakes, worry only that you might miss out on a glorious opportunity because you were too timid. If you take a chance it will pay off, even if the odds are stacked against you.

Virgo Aug. 24 - Sept. 23
Someone in a position of authority will challenge you to do more and do better today. You will rise to the challenge and show them and the world at large what you can do. Your ambition knows no bounds.

Libra Sept. 24 - Oct. 23
You are in the mood to shock. You want to see the look of amazement on other people's faces when you say or do things they don't approve of. Don't go too far though or even your friends may start to avoid you.

Scorpio Oct. 24 - Nov. 22
A falling out of some kind is likely today and it is unlikely to be very pretty. You have had your fill of being pushed around and now certain people need to learn that you can bite as well as bark.

Sagittarius Nov. 23 - Dec. 21
If you go it alone today you will do okay, but if you work with others you will accomplish ten times as much. Mars urges you to put petty differences aside and join with those who share your ideals.

Capricorn Dec. 22 - Jan. 20
If you find yourself under pressure today you will most likely have brought it on yourself. You have taken on too many duties recently and now you are starting to pay the price. Cut back on your workload.

Aquarius Jan. 21 - Feb. 19
You will find yourself drawn to a person who is strong and powerful and the planets indicate you are a good fit creatively. Get together to work on a project that you both find inspiring.

Pisces Feb. 20 - March 20
Something has stung you into action and you have every intention of making your mark. Your problem most of the time is that you are too sensitive but that won't be such an issue today.

CONCEPTIS SUDOKU by Dave Green

Every row, column and box contains 1-9

8				7		3		4
	6						5	
9		2				6		
			3		6			
6								1
			4		8			
		8				2		7
	5						9	
3		7		9				5

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